

PATENT
Atty. Dkt. No. ATT/2003-0040

REMARKS

In view of the following discussion, the Applicants submit that none of the claims now pending in the application are unpatentable or anticipated under the provisions 35 U.S.C. §§ 112 and 102. Thus, the Applicants believe that all of these claims are now in allowable form.

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I. CLAIM OBJECTIONS

The Examiner objected to claim 8 for informalities. Responsive to the Examiner, the Applicants herein amend claim 8 to insert "event" after "network". As such, the Applicants respectfully request the objection be withdrawn.

II. REJECTION OF CLAIM 6 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejected claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. The Examiner asserts that the order of steps in view of claim 6 is logically unclear.

The Applicants respectfully submit that a method claim does not necessarily impart a particular order of the steps. Rather, the independent method claim 1 should be broadly read as a list of minimum steps, in no particular order, required to implement the method of claim 1.

The Examiner's assumption that steps b) and c) "depend" from step a) may be mis-guided due to the use of letters. To clarify this position, the Applicants herein amend claims 1-4, 6-8 and 11 to delete all letters.

Therefore, claim 1 should be broadly interpreted without the limitation alleged by the Examiner, whereas dependent claim 6 introduces limitations that specify an order of the steps outlined in independent claim 1. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that claim 6 satisfies the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and request the rejection be withdrawn.

III. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-5 AND 7-11 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1-5 and 7-11 as being anticipated by Doshi, et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0008619, published on January 15,

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2004, hereinafter referred to as "Doshi"). The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Doshi teaches bundling messages in communication networks.

The Examiner's attention is directed to the fact that Doshi fails to teach or to suggest the novel concept of a method, apparatus or computer readable medium for reducing signaling load in a communication network having a plurality of switches, comprising identifying a plurality of circuits affected by a network event and grouping affected circuits in accordance with one or more end-switches to which a plurality of signaling messages have to be sent, as positively claimed by Applicants' independent claims 1, 8 and 11. Specifically, Applicants' amended independent claims 1, 8 and 11 recite:

1. A method for reducing signaling load in a communication network having a plurality of switches, said method comprising the steps of:
receiving a notification of a network event;
identifying a plurality of circuits affected by said network event;
grouping affected circuits in accordance with one or more end-switches to which a plurality of signaling messages have to be sent; and
bundling said plurality of signaling messages.
8. An apparatus for reducing signaling load in a communication network having a plurality of switches, said apparatus comprising:
a controller for receiving a notification of a network event, and for
identifying a plurality of circuits affected by said network event, and for
grouping affected circuits in accordance with one or more end-switches to which a plurality of signaling messages have to be sent, and for bundling
said plurality of signaling messages.
11. A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of instructions, the plurality of instructions including instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform the steps comprising of:
receiving a notification of a network event;
identifying a plurality of circuits affected by said network event;
grouping affected circuits in accordance with one or more end-switches to which a plurality of signaling messages have to be sent; and
bundling said plurality of signaling messages.

In one embodiment, the Applicants' invention teaches a method, apparatus or computer readable medium for reducing signaling load in a

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communication network having a plurality of switches, comprising identifying a plurality of circuits affected by a network event and grouping affected circuits in accordance with one or more end-switches to which a plurality of signaling messages have to be sent. For example, when a failure of a link is detected, a switch will group affected circuits with a common end switch. (See e.g., Applicants' specification, para. [0049]). Subsequently, the switch bundles the messages for each circuit in the group into one or more signaling packets and sends the packet to the respective end switch. (See *Id.* at para. [0052]).

Doshi fails to anticipate the Applicants' invention because Doshi fails to teach or suggest a method, apparatus or computer readable medium for reducing signaling load in a communication network having a plurality of switches, comprising identifying a plurality of circuits affected by a network event and grouping affected circuits in accordance with one or more end-switches to which a plurality of signaling messages have to be sent. Doshi only teaches that after receiving a plurality of connection requests, the receiving node bundles the connection requests into a single message via an alternate path. (See Doshi, para. [0028] and [0031]). Notably, Doshi is not concerned with identifying all circuits affected by the network event.

For example, Doshi does not teach or suggest that when link L2 fails (Doshi, para. [0030]) that node B identifies affected paths (A-B-C), (A-D-B-C), (D-B-C) or (D-A-B-C). Rather, Doshi simply teaches that when link L2 fails that node A simply bundles set-up requests for node D and then sends the bundled requests to node D for the path A to D to C. (See Doshi, para. [0031]). Nor does Doshi teach or suggest that affected circuits are grouped in accordance with one or more end-switches to which a plurality of signaling messages have to be sent. Furthermore, Doshi is referring to paths, whereas Applicants' invention claims a plurality of circuits, where the multiple circuits may be carried over the same path or a different path (See e.g., Applicants' Table 1, circuit 131 and circuit 132). In other words, Applicants' invention addresses the network event from the perspective of the affected circuits and how the signaling messages pertaining to these affected circuits will be handled.

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In contrast, Doshi is silent as to the handling of multiple affected circuits e.g., over the same path. Doshi is silent as to how affected circuits will be reported in terms of signaling messages that must be sent when these affected circuits are detected. Instead, Doshi is only concerned with bundling set-up requests to be forwarded on a different path to bypass the down link. In sum, Doshi is not addressing how to handle signaling messages reporting affected circuits caused by the down link, but is only describing, at best, how to bundle set-up requests to be forwarded on an alternate path to bypass the down link. Therefore, Doshi clearly fails to anticipate the Applicants' independent claims 1, 8 and 11.

Moreover, dependent claims 2-5, 7, 9 and 10 depend from independent claims 1 and 8, respectively, and recite additional limitations. As such, and for the exact same reason set forth above, the Applicants submit that claims 2-5, 7, 9 and 10 are also patentable and not anticipated by Doshi. As such, the Applicants respectfully request the rejection be withdrawn.

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CONCLUSION

Thus, the Applicants believe that all these claims are presently in condition for allowance. Accordingly, both reconsideration of this application and its swift passage to issue are earnestly solicited.

If, however, the Examiner believes that there are any unresolved issues requiring the issuance of a final action in any of the claims now pending in the application, it is requested that the Examiner telephone Mr. Kin-Wah Tong, Esq. at (732) 530-9404 so that appropriate arrangements can be made for resolving such issues as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully Submitted,

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